

# LINGUISTICS

linguistics.northwestern.edu

Linguistics is the scientific study of language, examining its structures, its social functions, how it is used to convey meaning, how it is acquired and processed in the mind and brain, and how it evolves over timespans of individuals and societies. Knowledge of the structure, origins, and functions of language can provide deep insight into human nature and behavior. The major and minor in linguistics prepare students for careers in technology, consulting, education, marketing and advertising, and behavioral research among many other possibilities. Students also are well prepared for graduate work in linguistics, speech-language pathology, cognitive science, and related disciplines.

Through their Linguistics courses, students will learn about language as a complex system with formal, cognitive, social and physical aspects. Students will explore the deep commonalities and systematic variation among diverse languages and speakers, as observed at multiple levels of linguistic organization, including sounds, words, sentences and discourses. Linguistics students will learn how the scientific method is used to develop theories based on empirical evidence, and refine their ability to communicate the scientific understanding of language and linguistic theories in written and oral presentations.

Linguistics majors are encouraged to participate in faculty research and to develop independent research. Students often enhance their linguistics major through interdisciplinary studies in cognitive science, computer science, communication sciences and disorders, psychology, philosophy, mathematics, or by studying world languages.

## Programs of Study

- Linguistics Major (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/linguistics/linguistics-major/>)
- Linguistics Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/linguistics/linguistics-minor/>)
- Linguistics BA/MA (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/linguistics/linguistics-ba-ma/>)

All 200-level linguistics courses have an experimental requirement. Students may fulfill this requirement by participating in any combination of two one-hour experiments or video showings. The experiments will be part of ongoing departmental research and illustrate features of language structure and use relevant to topics covered in the core linguistics curriculum. Similarly, the videos will be on topics covered in the core curriculum.

**LING 101-7 College Seminar (1 Unit)** Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and introducing skills necessary to thriving at Northwestern. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated.

**LING 101-8 First-Year Writing Seminar (1 Unit)** Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and focused on the fundamentals of effective, college-level written communication. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated.

**LING 220-0 Language and Society (1 Unit)** Introduction to linguistic variation and change from a variety of perspectives on social processes. How language can be connected with social group membership and viewed as a tool used in social practice to construct identity. These

issues are explored through the quantitative analysis of linguistic variation in a social context. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

**LING 221-0 Language and Prejudice (1 Unit)** Exploration of language variation in the US context, attitudes toward different language varieties, and the research methods used to study these. Topics include linguistic prejudice and discrimination, language ideologies, and language and the law. *Ethics Values Distro Area*

**LING 222-0 Language, Politics, and Identity (1 Unit)** Role of language in constructing, preserving, and manipulating political and national identities. Topics include language discrimination, linguistic nationalism, language and religion, alphabet issues, dialect issues. Regional content varies. LING 222-0 and SLAVIC 222-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *Ethics Values Distro Area Historical Studies Distro Area Interdisciplinary Distro* - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>)

**LING 223-0 Language & Gender (1 Unit)** Exploration of socially and linguistically significant differences in the language used by/about/to men and women, focusing on the role of language in constructing gender as part of local communities of practice. Taught with GNDR\_ST 234-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area*

**LING 250-0 Sound Patterns in Human Language (1 Unit)** Introduction to phonetics and phonology. Description and classification of speech sounds in terms of articulation, acoustics, and perception. Similarities and differences of sound patterns across languages. Introduction to speech technology. *Natural Sciences Distro Area Natural Sciences Foundational Discipline*

**LING 260-0 Formal Analysis of Words & Sentences (1 Unit)** Formal structure of words (morphology) and sentences (syntax) in natural language. Biological basis of human language. *Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 270-0 Meaning (1 Unit)** How information is encoded in words and sentences and how speakers and listeners use language to communicate. *Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 300-0 Topics in Linguistics (1 Unit)** Topics in linguistic theory. Content varies. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

**LING 312-0 Experimental Sociolinguistics (1 Unit)** Experimental approaches to the social meaning of language. Discussion of sociolinguistic research questions best suited to the use of experimental methods. Investigation of theoretical and methodological contributions of experimental work to sociolinguistic theory. Social inferences based on language, social expectations' influence on linguistic perception, roles of experiences, stereotypes and attitudes on language, awareness and control in sociolinguistic perception. Prerequisite: LING 220 or 250; graduate standing or consent of instructor. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

**LING 315-0 Experimental Approaches to Word Form Processing (1 Unit)** Experimental techniques and theoretical models for analyzing perception and production of spoken and written word forms. Access to the mental lexicon in perception and production. Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics.

*Advanced Expression Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

**LING 316-0 Experimental Syntax (1 Unit)**

Experimental methodologies and theories of sentence comprehension. Studies of syntactic structures in sentence comprehension.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics.

*Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area*

**LING 317-0 Experimental Pragmatics (1 Unit)**

Experimental methodologies for analyzing the role of context in utterance production and comprehension. Taught with PSYCH 460-0.

Prerequisite: any 200-level course in linguistics or consent of instructor.

*Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area*

**LING 320-0 Sociolinguistics (1 Unit)**

Overview of classic and contemporary work in sociolinguistics. How quantitative methods in linguistics can be coupled with social theoretic insights to engage questions in linguistic variation and change, stylistic practice, how language reflects, reinforces, or contests social inequalities.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics; graduate standing or consent of instructor.

*Advanced Expression Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

**LING 321-0 Bilingualism (1 Unit)**

Cognitive, linguistic, neuroscientific, and computational aspects of the acquisition, representation, and processing of two or more languages in an individual's mind/brain.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics.

*Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

**LING 327-0 Language & Sexuality (1 Unit)** The use of language to construct sexual identity, focusing on the language of and about members of LGBTQ+ community. Topics include heteronormativity, identity labels and categories, gender vs. sex vs. sexuality, and cross-cultural sexual diversity. Taught with LING 327-0; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: any 200-level course in linguistics or consent of instructor.

**LING 330-0 Research Methods in Linguistics (1 Unit)**

Methods of linguistic data collection, management, and analysis with an emphasis on the use of computational, experimental, and statistical methods.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics, graduate standing or consent of instructor.

*Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis Formal Studies Distro Area Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area*

**LING 331-0 Text Processing for Linguists (1 Unit)**

A practical introduction to programming and the analysis of natural language text for students with little-to-no programming background. Students will learn Unix command line tools, basic programming in Python, concepts like abstraction and decomposition, how to clean and organize linguistic datasets, and methods from computational linguistics. In their final project, students curate and analyze a new dataset.

*Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 334-0 Introduction to Computational Linguistics (1 Unit)**

Hands-on introduction to computational methods in empirical linguistic analysis and natural language processing. Topics include language modeling, text classification, linguistic annotation, and computational semantics. Students will implement and apply computational models to real linguistic datasets, and conclude the course with a final project.

Prerequisites: COMP\_SCI 110-0 or LING 331-0, or consent of instructor. Programming experience required.

*Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 341-0 Language Typology (1 Unit)**

A comparison of varying and universal features of the world's languages.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics, graduate standing or consent of instructor.

*Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 342-0 Structure of Various Languages (1 Unit)**

Phonological, morphological, or syntactic structure of a particular language. May be repeated for credit with change in language.

Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics, graduate standing or consent of instructor.

*Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 350-0 Fundamentals of Laboratory Phonology (1 Unit)**

Sound patterns of diverse languages and their expression in articulatory and acoustic phonetics. Syllable structure, phonotactics, morpho-phonological alternation, stress. Fundamentals of laboratory methods and the quantitative analysis of speech data.

Prerequisite: any 200-level Linguistics course or consent of instructor.

*Natural Sciences Distro Area Natural Sciences Foundational Discipline*

**LING 360-0 Fundamentals of Syntax (1 Unit)**

Fundamental principles of theoretical syntax. Phrase structure, argument structure, movement operations. Emphasis on argumentation, hypothesis formation and testing, and analytic methods.

Prerequisite: LING 260-0.

*Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 363-0 Making a Dictionary: The Northwestern Project (1 Unit)**

Creation of an online dictionary of Northwestern jargon, slang, etc.

Learning about the connection between language, society, and identity; sociolinguistic fieldwork; lexicography; politics of dictionaries; culture and power of book form vs. digital. LING 363-0 and SLAVIC 322-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area*

**LING 370-0 Fundamentals of Meaning (1 Unit)**

Theoretical approaches to the study of linguistic meaning. Topics include word meaning, argument and event structure, sentence meaning, truth conditions, and inference types (e.g., entailment, implicature, presupposition). Prerequisite: any 200 level course in linguistics, graduate standing or consent of instructor.

*Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 371-0 Reference (1 Unit)** Linguistic and philosophical approaches to the study of reference, focusing on the role of context in the use and interpretation of referring expressions. Topics include definiteness, common ground, genericity, deixis, and anaphora. Prerequisite: any 200-level course in linguistics, a course in philosophy of language, or consent of instructor. *Formal Studies Distro Area*

**LING 372-0 Pragmatics (1 Unit)**

Introduction to extra-semantic meaning, focusing on the role of context in utterance production and interpretation. Topics include the semantics-pragmatics boundary, implicature, presupposition, speech acts, reference, and information structure.

Prerequisite: any 200-level course in linguistics or consent of instructor.

**LING 373-0 Implicature (1 Unit)**

An interdisciplinary approach to the study of extra-semantic meaning, drawing on primary readings from linguistics, philosophy, and psychology.

Topics include conversational and conventional implicature, explicature, implicature, and the semantics-pragmatics boundary.

Prerequisite: any 200-level course in linguistics or consent of instructor.

*Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area*

**LING 380-0 Spoken English for Nonnative Speakers (0 Unit)**

Conversational English addressing all oral language skills; primarily for international graduate students and postdoctoral trainees who are nonnative speakers of English, or native speakers of an English dialect not commonly used in the 50 US states. Content varies.

**LING 381-0 Written English for Nonnative Speakers (0 Unit)**

Written argumentation skills and all aspects of academic writing; primarily for international graduate students and postdoctoral trainees who are nonnative speakers of English, or native speakers of an English dialect not commonly used in the 50 US states. Content varies.

**LING 398-0 Undergraduate Seminar in Linguistics (1 Unit)** By invitation of the department. For students of superior ability, with choice of topic left to the group.

**LING 399-0 Independent Study (1 Unit)**